

**PATENT**

Replication-Competent Anti-Cancer Vectors

Reference to Government Grant

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Background of the Invention

(1) Field of the Invention

This invention relates generally to the treatment of cancer and more particularly to vectors which replicate in neoplastic cells and which overexpress an adenovirus death protein (ADP) and to the use of these vectors in treating human cancer.

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(2) Description of the Related Art

Cancer is a leading cause of death in the United States and elsewhere. Depending on the type of cancer, it is typically treated with surgery, chemotherapy, and/or radiation. These treatments often fail: surgery may not remove all the cancer; some cancers are resistant to chemotherapy and radiation therapy; and chemotherapy-resistant tumors frequently develop. New therapies are necessary, to be used alone or in combination with classical techniques.

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One potential therapy under active investigation is treating tumors with recombinant viral vectors expressing anti-cancer therapeutic proteins. Adenovirus-based vectors contain several characteristics that make them conceptually appealing for use in treating cancer, as well as for therapy of genetic disorders. Adenoviruses (hereinafter used interchangeably with "Ads") can easily be grown in culture to high titer stocks that are stable. They have a broad host range, replicating in most human cancer cell types. Their genome can be manipulated by site-directed mutation and insertion of foreign genes expressed from foreign promoters.

The adenovirion consists of a DNA-protein core within a protein capsid (reviewed by Stewart et al., "Adenovirus structure by x-ray crystallography and electron microscopy." in: *The Molecular Repertoire of Adenoviruses*, Doerfler, W. et al., (ed.), Springer-Verlag, Heidelberg, Germany, p. 25-38). Virions bind to a specific cellular receptor, are endocytosed, and the genome is extruded from endosomes and transported to the nucleus. The genome is a linear duplex DNA of about 36 kbp, encoding about 36 genes (Fig. 1A). In the nucleus, the "immediate early" E1A proteins are expressed initially, and these proteins induce expression of the "delayed early" proteins encoded by the E1B, E2, E3, and E4 transcription units (reviewed by Shenk, T. "Adenoviridae: the viruses and their replication" in: *Fields Virology*, Field, B.N. et al., Lippencott-Raven, Philadelphia, p. 2111-2148). E1A proteins also induce or repress cellular genes, resulting in stimulation of the cell cycle. About 23 early proteins function to usurp the cell and initiate viral DNA replication. Viral DNA replicates at about 7 h post-infection (p.i.), then late genes are expressed from the "major late" transcription unit. Major late mRNAs are synthesized from the common "major late promoter" by alternative pre-mRNA processing. Each late mRNA contains a common "tripartite leader" at its 5'-terminus (exons 1, 2, and 3 in Fig. 1), which allows for efficient translation of Ad late mRNAs. Cellular protein synthesis is shut off, and the cell becomes a factory for making viral proteins. Virions assemble in the nucleus at about 1 day p.i., and after 2-3 days the cell lyses and releases progeny virus. Cell lysis is mediated by the E3 11.6K protein, which has been renamed "adenovirus death protein" (ADP) (Tollefson et al., *J. Virol.* 70:2296-2306, 1996; Tollefson et al., *Virol.* 220:152-162, 1996). The term ADP as used herein in a generic sense refers collectively to ADP's from adenoviruses such as, e.g. Ad type 1 (Ad1), Ad type 2 (Ad2), Ad type 5 (Ad5) or Ad type 6 (Ad6) all of which express homologous ADP's with a high degree of sequence similarity.

The Ad vectors being investigated for use in anti-cancer and gene therapy are based on recombinant Ad's that are either replication-defective or replication-competent. Typical replication-defective Ad vectors lack the E1A and E1B genes (collectively known as E1) and contain in their place an expression cassette consisting of a promoter and pre-mRNA

processing signals which drive expression of a foreign gene. These vectors are unable to replicate because they lack the E1A genes required to induce Ad gene expression and DNA replication. In addition, the E3 genes are usually deleted because they are not essential for virus replication in cultured cells.

5           A number of investigators have constructed replication-defective Ad vectors expressing anti-cancer therapeutic proteins. Usually, these vectors have been tested by direct injection of human tumors growing in mouse models. Most commonly, these vectors express the thymidine kinase gene from herpes simplex virus, and the mice are treated with gancyclovir to kill cells transduced by the vector (see e.g., Felzmann et al., *Gene Ther.* 4:1322-1329, 1997). Another suicide gene therapy approach involves injecting tumors with a replication defective Ad vector expressing cytosine deaminase, followed by administration of 5-fluorocytosine (Topf et al., *Gene Ther.* 5:507-513, 1998). Investigators have also prepared and tested replication-defective Ad vectors expressing a cytokine-such as IL-2, IL-12, IL-6, tumor necrosis factor (TNF), type I interferons, or the co-stimulatory molecule B7-1 in the anticipation that the Ad-expressed cytokine will stimulate an immune response, including cytotoxic T-lymphocytes (CTL), against the tumor (Felzmann et al., *supra*; Putzer et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 94:10889-10894, 1997). Other vectors express tumor antigens (e.g. melanoma MART1), proteins that de-regulate the cell cycle and induce apoptosis (p53, pRB, p21<sup>Kip1/WAF1</sup>, p16<sup>CDKN2</sup>, and even Ad E1A), and ribozymes. An Ad vector expressing FasL induces apoptosis and tumor regression of a mouse tumor (Arai et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 94:13862-13867, 1997).

Despite these generally positive reports, it is recognized in the art that replication-defective Ad vectors have several characteristics that make them suboptimal for use in therapy. For example, production of replication-defective vectors requires that they be grown on a complementing cell line that provides the E1A proteins in trans. Such cell lines are fastidious, and generation of virus stocks is time-consuming and expensive. In addition, although many foreign proteins have been expressed from such vectors, the level of expression is low compared to Ad late proteins.

To address these problems, several groups have proposed using replication-competent Ad vectors for therapeutic use. Replication-competent vectors retain Ad genes essential for replication and thus do not require complementing cell lines to replicate. Replication-competent Ad vectors lyse cells as a natural part of the life cycle of the vector. Another advantage of replication-competent Ad vectors occurs when the vector is engineered to encode and express a foreign protein. Such vectors would be expected to greatly amplify synthesis of the encoded protein *in vivo* as the vector replicates. For use as anti-cancer agents,

replication-competent viral vectors would theoretically also be advantageous in that they should replicate and spread throughout the tumor, not just in the initial infected cells as is the case with replication-defective vectors.

Wyeth Laboratories developed replication-competent Ad vectors for vaccination purposes, using vaccine strains of Ad serotypes 4, 7, and 5 (Lubeck et al., *AIDS Res. Hum. Retroviruses* 10:1443-1449, 1994). Foreign genes were inserted into the E3 region (with the E3 genes deleted) or into a site at the right end of the genome. Two foreign genes used were hepatitis B surface antigen and the HIV envelope protein. They obtained good expression in culture, and were able to raise antisera in animal models. Phase I human trials were ambiguous, and the project was mostly abandoned.

Onyx Pharmaceuticals recently reported on adenovirus-based anti-cancer vectors which are replication deficient in non-neoplastic cells but which exhibit a replication phenotype in neoplastic cells lacking functional p53 and/or retinoblastoma (pRB) tumor suppressor proteins (U.S. Patent No. 5,677,178; Heise et al., *Nature Med.* 6:639-645, 1997; Bischoff et al., *Science* 274:373-376, 1996). This phenotype is reportedly accomplished by using recombinant adenoviruses containing a mutation in the E1B region that make the encoded E1B-55K protein incapable of binding to p53 and/or a mutation(s) in the E1A region which make the encoded E1A protein (p289R or p243R) incapable of binding to pRB and/or the cellular 300 kD polypeptide and/or the 107 kD polypeptide. E1B-55K has at least two independent functions: it binds and inactivates the tumor suppressor protein p53, and it is required for efficient transport of Ad mRNA from the nucleus. Because these E1B and E1A viral proteins are involved in forcing cells into S-phase, which is required for replication of adenovirus DNA, and because the p53 and pRB proteins block cell cycle progression, the recombinant adenovirus vectors described by Onyx should replicate in cells defective in p53 and/or pRB, which is the case for many cancer cells, but not in cells with wild-type p53 and/or pRB. Onyx has reported that replication of an adenovirus lacking E1B-55K, which is named ONYX-015, was restricted to p53-minus cancer cell lines (Bischoff et al., *supra*), and that ONYX-015 slowed the growth or caused regression of a p53-minus human tumor growing in nude mice (Heise et al., *supra*). Others have challenged the Onyx report claiming that replication of ONYX-015 is independent of p53 genotype and occurs efficiently in some primary cultured human cells (Harada and Berk, *J. Virol* 73:5333-5344, 1999). ONYX-015 does not replicate as well as wild-type adenovirus because E1B-55K is not available to facilitate viral mRNA transport from the nucleus. Also, ONYX-015 expresses less ADP than wild-type virus (see Example 1 below).

As an extension of the ONYX-015 concept, a replication-competent adenovirus vector was designed that has the gene for E1B-55K replaced with the herpes simplex virus thymidine kinase gene (Wilder et al., *Gene Therapy* 6:57-62, 1999). The group that constructed this vector reported that the combination of the vector plus gancyclovir showed a therapeutic effect on a human colon cancer in a nude mouse model (Wilder et al., *Cancer Res.* 59:410-413, 1999). However, this vector lacks the gene for ADP, and accordingly, the vector will lyse cells and spread from cell-to-cell less efficiently than an equivalent vector that expresses ADP. The gene for ADP is also lacking in another replication-competent adenovirus vector that has been described, in which a minimal enhancer/promoter of the human prostate specific antigen was inserted into the adenovirus E1A enhancer/promoter (Rodriguez et al., *Cancer Res.* 57:2559-2563, 1997).

Thus, there is a continuing need for vectors that replicate and spread efficiently in tumors but that can be modified such that they replicate poorly or not at all in normal tissue.

#### 15 Summary of the Invention

Briefly, therefore, the present invention is directed to novel vectors which are replication competent in neoplastic cells and which overexpress an adenovirus death protein (ADP). The work reported herein demonstrates the discovery that overexpression of ADP by a recombinant adenovirus allows the construction of a replication-competent adenovirus that kills neoplastic cells and spreads from cell-to-cell at a rate similar to or faster than that exhibited by adenoviruses expressing wild-type levels of ADP, even when the recombinant adenovirus contains a mutation that would otherwise reduce its replication rate in non-neoplastic cells. This discovery was unexpected because it could not have been predicted from what was known about adenovirus biology that Ad vectors overexpressing ADP remain viable and that the infected cells are not killed by the higher amounts of ADP before the Ad vector produces new virus particles that can spread to other tumor cells. Indeed, naturally-occurring adenoviruses express ADP in low amounts from the E3 promoter at early stages of infection, and begin to make ADP in large amounts only at 24-30 h p.i., once virions have been assembled in the cell nucleus. It is believed that other non-adenoviral vectors can be used to deliver ADP's cell-killing activity to neoplastic cells, including other viral vectors and plasmid expression vectors.

Thus, in one preferred embodiment, the ADP-expressing vector comprises a recombinant adenovirus lacking expression of at least one E3 protein selected from the group consisting of: gp19K; RID $\alpha$  (also known as 10.4K); RID $\beta$  (also known as 14.5K) and 14.7K. Because these E3 proteins inhibit immune-mediated inflammation and/or apoptosis of Ad-

infected cells, it is believed that a recombinant adenovirus lacking one or more of these E3 proteins will stimulate infiltration of inflammatory and immune cells into a tumor treated with the adenovirus and that this host immune response will aid in destruction of the tumor as well as tumors that have metastasized. The ADP expressed by preferred embodiments comprises a naturally-occurring amino acid sequence from a human adenovirus of subgroup C, namely Ad1, Ad2, Ad5 and Ad6.

In another embodiment, replication of the vector is restricted to neoplastic cells. Such replication-restricted vectors are useful in treating cancer patients in which it is desirable to eliminate or reduce damage to normal cells and tissues that might be caused by the vector, particularly viral vectors that kill the host cell as part of their life cycle. In preferred embodiments, a recombinant adenovirus has a replication-restricted phenotype because the recombinant adenovirus is incapable of expressing an E1A viral protein which binds the pRB and the p300/CBP proteins or because the E4 promoter has been substituted with a promoter that is activated only in neoplastic cells.

In yet another embodiment, the invention provides a vector which overexpresses ADP and whose replication is under the control of a tissue specific promoter or an inducible promoter. In preferred embodiments, the vector comprises a recombinant adenovirus in which the tissue specific promoter or inducible promoter is substituted for the E4 promoter. Such vectors are useful for restricting replication of the vector and its ADP-mediated cell killing to cells of a particular type or to cells exposed to an exogenous agent that activates the promoter. A preferred tissue-specific or inducible vector also expresses a phenotype that restricts its replication to neoplastic cells.

In yet another embodiment, the invention provides a vector which overexpresses ADP but which is not restricted to tumors by a specific genetic modification. Such a vector is more destructive to neoplastic cells than even the naturally occurring Ad's of subgroup C. In preferred embodiments, this vector could be used for patients with terminal cancer not treatable by another method, and who have pre-existing neutralizing antibodies to Ad or to which neutralizing antibodies can be administered.

In still another embodiment, the invention provides a composition comprising a first recombinant virus which is replication competent in a neoplastic cell and overexpresses the adenovirus death protein. In one embodiment, the recombinant virus is contained within a delivery vehicle comprising a targeting moiety that limits delivery of the virus to cells of a certain type. With this embodiment, the replication-competent vector can be of any ADP-overexpressing configuration described herein. In some embodiments, the composition also comprises a second recombinant virus which is replication-defective and which expresses an

anti-cancer gene product. The recombinant virus complements spread of the replication-defective virus, as well as its encoded anti-cancer product, throughout a tumor. In preferred embodiments, the first recombinant virus is a recombinant adenovirus whose replication is restricted to neoplastic cells and/or which lacks expression of one or more of the E3 gp19K;

5 RID $\alpha$ ; RID $\beta$ ; and 14.7K proteins.

The ADP-expressing vectors and compositions of the invention are useful in a method for promoting death of a neoplastic cell. The method comprises contacting the neoplastic cell with a vector which is replication-competent in the neoplastic cell and which overexpresses ADP. Where the neoplastic cell comprises a tumor in a patient, the vector is  
10 administered directly to the tumor or, in other embodiments, the vector is administered to the patient systemically or in a delivery vehicle containing a targeting moiety that directs delivery of the vector to the tumor. In embodiments where the vector is a recombinant virus, the method can also comprise passively immunizing the patient against the virus.

In yet another embodiment of the invention, the vector may be used in combination  
15 with radiation therapy. The radiation therapy can be any form of radiation therapy used in the art such as for example, external beam radiation such as x-ray treatment, radiation delivered by insertion of radioactive materials within the body near or at the tumor site such as treatment with gamma ray emitting radionuclides, particle beam therapy which utilizes neutrons or charged particles and the like. In addition, this embodiment encompasses the use  
20 of more than one of the vectors of the present invention in a cocktail in combination with radiation therapy.

Another embodiment of the invention involves the use of the recombinant vector in combination with chemotherapy as has been disclosed for other adenovirus vectors (U.S. Patent No. 5,846,945). Chemotherapeutic agents are known in the art and include  
25 antimetabolites including pyrimidine-analogue and purine-analogue antimetabolites, plant alkaloids, antitumor antibiotics, alkylating agents and the like. The use of more than one of the vectors of the present invention with a chemotherapeutic agent or agents is also contemplated within this embodiment.

Among the several advantages found to be achieved by the present invention,  
30 therefore, may be noted the provision of replication-competent vectors, particularly viruses, which rapidly kill cancer cells and spread from cell-to-cell in a tumor; the provision of such vectors whose replication can be induced or which is restricted to tumors and/or to cells of a certain tissue type; and the provision of compositions and methods for anti-cancer therapy which cause little to no side effects in normal tissues.

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### Brief Description of the Drawings

Figure 1 is a schematic of gene expression in Ad5 (Fig. 1A) and KD3, a preferred embodiment of the invention (Fig. 1B), in which the respective genomes are represented by the stippled bars and transcription units represented by arrows above and below the bars, with the E3 proteins listed above the arrows for the E3 transcription unit, and the L1 to L5 families of late mRNA's indicated.

Figure 2 illustrates the overexpression of ADP by KD1, KD3, GZ1, and GZ3 showing an immunoblot of proteins isolated from human A549 cells infected with the indicated viruses and probed with an anti-ADP antibody, with ADP indicating differently glycosylated and proteolytically processed forms of ADP.

Figure 3 illustrates that the E1A *d1101/1107* mutation referred to in the figure and hereinafter as *d101/07*, retards expression of late proteins, showing an immunoblot of E1A proteins and late proteins in A549 cells infected with the indicated viruses in the absence (Figs. 3A and 3B) or presence (Figs. 3C and 3D) of *d1327*, which has a wild-type E1A region and has a deletion of all E3 genes but the gene encoding the 12.5K protein (Figs. 3C and 3D). An antiserum specific to the E1A proteins was used for Fig. 3A and 3C. An antiserum raised against Ad5 virions was used for Figs. 3B and 3D.

Figure 4 illustrates that KD1 and KD3 kill cells more efficiently than control viruses that express less or no ADP, showing a graph of the percent of A549 cells infected with the indicated viruses that were viable at the indicated days p.i. as determined by trypan blue exclusion.

Figure 5 is a cell spread assay illustrating that overexpression of ADP enhances spread of virus from cell to cell, showing monolayers infected with the indicated viruses at the indicated PFU/cell which were treated at 7 days p.i. with crystal violet, which stains live cells but not dead cells.

Figure 6 illustrates that KD1 and KD3 replicate well in growing cells but not in growth-arrested cells showing the virus titer extracted from growing or growth arrested HEL-229 cells at various times following infection with 100 PFU/ml of the following viruses: *d1309* (Fig. 6A), *d101/07* (fig. 6B), KD1 (Fig. 6C) and KD3 (Fig 6D).

Figure 7 illustrates that KD1 and KD3 are defective in killing primary human bronchial epithelial cells showing these cell monolayers infected at 30% confluency with 10 PFU/ml of the indicated viruses and stained at 5 days p.i. with neutral red.

Figure 8 illustrates that KD1 and KD3 reduce the growth rate of human A549 cell tumors growing in nude mice, showing in Fig. 8A a graph of average-fold increase in tumor size plotted against the number of weeks following infection of the tumor with buffer or with



5 x 10<sup>7</sup> PFU at weekly intervals of or the indicated viruses, and showing in Fig. 8B a similar graph of tumors injected once with 5 x 10<sup>8</sup> PFU of KD3 or GZ3.

Figure 9 illustrates that KD1 and KD3 reduce the growth rate of human Hep3B cell tumors growing in nude mice, showing a graph of average-fold increase in tumor size plotted against the number of weeks following injection of the tumor with buffer or with 5 x 10<sup>7</sup> PFU of *dl309*, KD1 or KD3 at twice weekly intervals of the indicated viruses.

Figure 10 illustrates that KD1 and KD3 complement the replication and spread of Ad- $\beta$ -gal, a replication-defective vector that expresses  $\beta$ -galactosidase, using an infectious center assay showing in Fig. 10A a picture of A549 cell monolayers seeded with A549 cells infected with Ad- $\beta$ -gal alone or with the indicated viruses, with Figs 10B and 10C showing close-up views of two of the monolayers of Fig. 10A.

Figure 11 is a bar graph illustrating that KD1 and KD3 increase the expression of luciferase in human Hep3B cell tumors growing in nude mice, using an assay in which tumors were injected with the indicated combinations of viruses, then were extracted 2 weeks p.i. and assayed for luciferase activity. The numbers in parentheses indicated the fold increase in luciferase activity compared to that of the Adluc vector plus buffer.

Figure 12 is a graph showing the results of a standard plaque development assay for KD1 and KD1-SPB on A549 cells engineered to express the TTF1 transcription factor (A549/TTF1) and the parental 549 cells, in which data are plotted as the number of plaques observed on a particular day in the assay divided by the final number of plaques observed for that virus multiplied by 100.

Figure 13 is a cell spread assay for KD1 and KD1-SPB on H441 cells and Hep3B cells, where cells were infected with the indicated amounts of KD1 or KD1-SPB and H441 cells and Hep3B cells were stained with crystal violet at 5 days p.i. and 8 days p.i., respectively.

Figure 14 is a graph showing the results of a standard plaque development assay for *dl309* and two preferred embodiments of the invention, GZ1 and GZ3, in which data are plotted as the number of plaques observed on a particular day in the assay divided by the final number of plaques observed for that virus multiplied by 100.

Figure 15 is a cell spread assay illustrating that the combination of KD1, KD3, GZ1, or GZ3 with x-ray radiation is more effective in destroying A549 cell monolayers than is virus vector alone or radiation alone, wherein cells were infected with the indicated amounts of the indicated viruses, radiated with 600 centigrays (cGy) of x-radiation (bottom panel), or mock radiated (top panel), then stained with crystal violet at 6 days p.i.

Figure 16 is a graph of a cell spread assay illustrating that  $10^{-3}$  PFU of KD1, KD3, GZ1, or GZ3 used in combination with 150, 300, or 600 centigreys of radiation is more effective in destroying A549 cell monolayers than virus vector alone or radiation alone. Cell viability is based on the amount of crystal violet extracted from the culture wells, using the mock-infected non-radiated well as 100% viability.

Figure 17 illustrates that the combination of KD3 or GZ3 plus x-ray radiation is more effective in reducing the growth of A549 cell tumors growing in nude mice than KD3 alone or GZ3 alone.

Figure 18 illustrates a structure-function analysis of ADP, showing in Fig. 18A the amino acid sequence of the adenovirus death protein encoded by Ad2, with the various putative domains and glycosylation sites labeled and showing in Fig. 18B a schematic of the ADP gene in *rec700* and in the indicated deletion mutants, with the right column summarizing the death promoting phenotype of the various mutants as a percentage of the wild-type phenotype.

Figures 19A and 19B illustrate a cell viability assay of the indicated ADP mutants showing a graph of viability as determined by trypan blue exclusion plotted against hours (Fig. 19A) or days (Fig. 19B) postinfection.

Figure 20 depicts the amino acid sequence, shown in single letter code, for the ADP proteins of Ad1, Ad2, Ad5, and Ad6 (SEQ ID NOS:5-8), for the Ad2 ADP mutants *dl716*, *dl715*, *dl714*, and *dl737* (SEQ ID NOS:9-12), and for putative luminal Domain (SEQ ID NO:17), transmembrane domain (SEQ ID NO:18), the cytosolic basic-proline domain (SEQ ID NO:19), and the remainder of the cytosolic domain (SEQ ID NO:20) of the ADP protein of Ad2.

Figure 21 presents the complete nucleotide sequence of the genome of Ad5.

Figure 22 presents the complete nucleotide sequence of the genome of KD1 (SEQ ID NO:1).

Figure 23 presents the complete nucleotide sequence of the genome of KD3 (SEQ ID NO:2).

### 30 Description of the Preferred Embodiments

In accordance with the present invention, it has been discovered that overexpression of ADP by a recombinant adenovirus results in faster lysis of cells and spread of the virus throughout a cell monolayer than viruses expressing wild-type levels of ADP. It has also been discovered that this function for ADP is manifest in an adenovirus which contains E1A mutations that restrict adenoviral replication to neoplastic cells. Thus, vectors which are both

replication competent in neoplastic cells and which overexpress ADP should be useful in anti-cancer therapy.

In the context of this disclosure, the following terms will be defined as follows unless otherwise indicated:

5 "Naturally-occurring" as applied to an object such as a polynucleotide, polypeptide, or virus means that the object can be isolated from a source in nature and has not been intentionally modified by a human.

"Neoplastic cell" means a cell which exhibits an aberrant growth phenotype characterized by a significant loss of control of cell proliferation and includes actively  
10 replicating cells as well as cells in a temporary non-replicative resting state ( $G_1$  or  $G_2$ ). A neoplastic cell may have a well-differentiated phenotype or a poorly-differentiated phenotype and may comprise a benign neoplasm or a malignant neoplasm.

"Recombinant virus" means any viral genome or virion which is different than a wild-type virus due to a deletion, insertion, or substitution of one or more nucleotides in the wild-  
15 type viral genome. The recombinant virus can have changes in the number of amino acid sequences encoded and expressed or in the amount or activity of proteins expressed by the virus. In particular, the term includes recombinant viruses generated by the intervention of a human.

"Replication-competent" as applied to a vector means that the vector is capable of  
20 replicating in normal and/or neoplastic cells. As applied to a recombinant virus, "replication-competent" means that the virus exhibits the following phenotypic characteristics in normal and/or neoplastic cells: cell infection; replication of the viral genome; and production and release of new virus particles; although one or more of these characteristics need not occur at the same rate as they occur in the same cell type infected by a wild-type virus, and may occur  
25 at a faster or slower rate. Where the recombinant virus is derived from a virus such as adenovirus that lyses the cell as part of its life cycle, it is preferred that at least 5 to 25% of the cells in a cell culture monolayer are dead 5 days after infection. Preferably, a replication-competent virus infects and lyses at least 25 to 50%, more preferably at least 75%, and most preferably at least 90% of the cells of the monolayer by 5 days post infection (p.i.).

30 "Replication-defective" as applied to a recombinant virus means the virus is incapable of or is greatly compromised in, replicating its genome in any cell type in the absence of a complementing replication-competent virus. Exceptions to this are cell lines such as 293 cells that have been engineered to express adenovirus E1A and E1B proteins.

"Replication-restricted" as applied to a vector of the invention means the vector  
35 replicates better in a dividing cell, i.e. either a neoplastic cell or a non-neoplastic, dividing

cell, than in a cell of the same type that is not neoplastic and/or not dividing, which is also referenced herein as a normal, non-dividing cell. Preferably, a replication-restricted virus kills at least 10% more neoplastic cells than normal, non-dividing cells in cell culture monolayers of the same size, as measured by the number of cells showing cytopathic effects (CPE) at 5 days p.i. More preferably, between 25% and 50%, and even more preferably, between 50% and 75% more neoplastic than normal cells are killed by a replication-restricted virus. Most preferably, a replication-restricted adenovirus kills between 75% and 100% more neoplastic than normal cells in equal sized monolayers by 5 days p.i.

In one embodiment the invention provides a vector that is replication-competent in neoplastic cells and which overexpresses an ADP. Vectors useful in the invention include but are not limited to plasmid-expression vectors, bacterial vectors such as *Salmonella* species that are able to invade and survive in a number of different cell types, vectors derived from DNA viruses such as human and non-human adenoviruses, adenovirus associated viruses (AAVs), poxviruses, herpesviruses, and vectors derived from RNA viruses such as retroviruses and alphaviruses. Preferred vectors include recombinant viruses engineered to overexpress an ADP. Recombinant adenoviruses are particularly preferred for use as the vector, especially vectors derived from Ad1, Ad2, Ad5 or Ad6.

Vectors according to the invention overexpress ADP. As applied to recombinant Ad and AAV vectors, the term "overexpresses ADP" means that more ADP molecules are made per viral genome present in a dividing cell infected by the vector than expressed by any previously known recombinant adenoviral vector or AAV in a dividing cell of the same type. As applied to other, non-adenoviral vectors, "overexpresses ADP" means that the virus expresses sufficient ADP to lyse a cell containing the vector.

Vectors overexpressing ADP can be prepared using routine methodology. (See, e.g., *A Laboratory Cloning Manual*, 2nd Ed., vol. 3, Sambrook et al., eds., Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press, 1989). For example, a polynucleotide encoding the ADP can be cloned into a plasmid expression vector known to efficiently express heterologous proteins in mammalian cells. The polynucleotide should also include appropriate termination and polyadenylation signals. Enhancer elements may also be added to the plasmid to increase the amount of ADP expression. Viral vectors overexpressing ADP can be prepared using similar materials and techniques.

Where the virus is a recombinant adenovirus, overexpression of ADP can be achieved in a multitude of ways. In general, any type of deletion in the E3 region that removes a splice site for any of the E3 mRNAs will lead to overexpression of the mRNA for ADP, inasmuch as more of the E3 pre-mRNA molecules will be processed into the mRNA for ADP. This is

exemplified in the KD1, KD3, GZ1 and GZ3 vectors (SEQ ID NOS:1-4) whose construction is described below. Other means of achieving overexpression of ADP in Ad vectors include, but are not limited to: insertion of pre-mRNA splicing and cleavage/polyadenylation signals at sites flanking the gene for ADP; expression of ADP from another promoter, e.g. the human  
 5 cytomegalovirus promoter, inserted into a variety of sites in the Ad genome; and insertion of the gene for ADP behind the gene for another Ad mRNA, together with a sequence on the 5' side of the ADP sequence that allows for internal initiation of translation of ADP, e.g. the Ad tripartite leader or a viral internal ribosome initiation sequence.

The ADP expressed by a vector according to the invention is any polypeptide  
 10 comprising a naturally-occurring full-length ADP amino acid sequence or variant thereof that confers upon a vector expressing the ADP the ability to lyse a cell containing the vector such that replicated copies of the vector are released from the infected cell. A preferred full-length ADP comprises the ADP amino acid sequence encoded by Ad1, Ad2, Ad5 or Ad6. These naturally-occurring ADP sequences are set forth in SEQ ID NOS:5-8, respectively. ADP  
 15 variants include fragments and deletion mutants of naturally-occurring adenovirus death proteins, as well as full-length molecules, fragments and deletion mutants containing conservative amino acid substitutions, provided that such variants retain the ability, when expressed by a vector inside a cell, to lyse the cell.

Conservative amino acid substitutions refer to the interchangeability of residues  
 20 having similar side chains. Conservatively substituted amino acids can be grouped according to the chemical properties of their side chains. For example, one grouping of amino acids includes those amino acids having neutral and hydrophobic side chains (A, V, L, I, P, W, F, and M); another grouping is those amino acids having neutral and polar side chains (G, S, T, Y, C, N, and Q); another grouping is those amino acids having basic side chains (K, R, and  
 25 H); another grouping is those amino acids having acidic side chains (D and E); another grouping is those amino acids having aliphatic side chains (G, A, V, L, and I); another grouping is those amino acids having aliphatic-hydroxyl side chains (S and T); another grouping is those amino acids having amine-containing side chains (N, Q, K, R, and H); another grouping is those amino acids having aromatic side chains (F, Y, and W); and another  
 30 grouping is those amino acids having sulfur-containing side chains (C and M). Preferred conservative amino acid substitutions groups are: R-K; E-D, Y-F, L-M; V-I, and Q-H.

As used herein, an ADP variant can also include modifications of a naturally-occurring ADP in which one or more amino acids have been inserted, deleted or replaced with a different amino acid or a modified or unusual amino acid, as well as modifications such as

glycosylation or phosphorylation of one or more amino acids so long as the ADP variant containing the modified sequence retains cell lysing activity.

As described below, the inventors herein performed a structure-function analysis of ADP which defined specific domains in ADP required to promote cell death. Using this information, when combined with known recombinant DNA and cloning methodology, it is believed the skilled artisan can readily construct ADP variants of a naturally-occurring adenovirus death protein and test them for cell lysing activity. A preferred ADP deletion mutant comprises an ADP amino acid sequence from any of the deletion mutants *dl716*, *dl715*, *dl714* and *dl737*, whose ADP sequences are set forth in SEQ ID NOS:9-12, respectively).

Where the vector is derived from a virus, it is preferred that the virus lack expression of one or more viral proteins involved in avoiding host anti-viral defenses such as immune-mediated inflammation and/or apoptosis of infected cells. For example, adenovirus contains a cassette of genes that prevents killing of Ad-infected cells by the immune system (Wold et al., *Semin. Virol.*, 1998 (8:515-523, 1998). The E3-14.7K protein and the E3 RID (Receptor Internalization and Degradation) protein, which is a complex consisting of RID $\alpha$  and RID $\beta$ , inhibit apoptosis of Ad-infected cells induced by tumor necrosis factor (TNF) and the Fas ligand which are expressed on, or secreted by, activated macrophages, natural killer (NK) cells, and cytotoxic lymphocytes (CTLs) (Tollefson et al., *Nature* 392:727-730, 1998). The E3-gp19K protein inhibits CTL-killing of infected cells by blocking transport of MHC class I antigens to the cell surface (Wold et al., *supra*). Thus, it is believed that infection of tumor cells by such viral vectors will stimulate infiltration of inflammatory cells and lymphocytes into the tumor, and will not prevent infected tumor cells from apoptosis induced by cytolytic cells of the immune system, or against apoptosis inducing cytokines. For example, it is known that when mice are infected with Ad mutants lacking the E3 gp19K, RID and 14.7K proteins there is a dramatic increase (as compared to E3-positive Ad) in infiltration of inflammatory cells and lymphocytes into the infected tissue (Sparer et al., *J. Virol.* 70:2431-2439, 1996). A similar infiltration of tumors infected by an ADP-expressing viral vector of the invention would be expected to further promote destruction of the tumor by adding an immune system attack to the ADP-mediated killing activity. For example, it is believed that the viral infection will stimulate formation of tumor-specific CTL's that can kill neoplastic cells not only in the tumor but also ones that have metastasized. In addition, it is also expected that vector-specific CTL's will be generated which could attack vector-infected cells if the vector spreads away from the tumor into normal cells. Because viral vectors

overexpressing ADP will spread rapidly through the tumor, it is believed these immune mechanisms will have little effect on spread of the vector.

Where the vector is a recombinant adenovirus, it is preferred that the adenovirus lack expression of each of the E3 gp19K, RID, and 14.7K proteins. By "lack expression" and "lacking expression" of a protein(s), "it is meant" that the viral genome contains one or more mutations that inactivates expression of a functional protein, i.e., one having all the functions of the wild-type protein. The inactivating mutation includes but is not limited to substitution or deletion of one or more nucleotides in the encoding gene(s) that prevents expression of functional transcripts or that results in transcripts encoding nonfunctional translation products. A particularly preferred way to inactivate expression of the Ad E3 gp19K, RID, and 14.7K proteins is by deleting the E3 region containing the genes encoding these proteins. Preferably, one or both of the E3 genes encoding the E3 6.7K and 12.5K proteins are also deleted because, as discussed in the Examples below, it is believed that deletion of most or all of the E3 genes other than the ADP gene facilitates overexpression of ADP mRNA by reducing competition for splicing of the major late pre-mRNAs. Preferred Ad vectors containing an E3 deletion that overexpress ADP are GZ1 (SEQ ID NO:3) and GZ3 (SEQ ID NO:4), whose construction and properties are described in the Examples below.

The invention also provides ADP-expressing vectors whose replication is restricted to dividing cells. Any means known to provide such a replication-restricted phenotype may be used. For example, WO 96/40238 describes microbes that preferentially invade tumor cells as well as methods for identifying and isolating bacterial promoters that are selectively activated in tumors. It is also contemplated that expression of one or more vector proteins essential for replication can be placed under the control of the promoter for a cellular gene whose expression is known to be upregulated in neoplastic cells. Examples of such genes include but are not limited to: the breast cancer markers mammaglobin (Watson et al., *Oncogene* 16:817-824, 1998); BRCA1 (Norris et al., *J. Biol. Chem.* 270:22777-22782, 1995) and *her2/neu* (Scott et al., *J. Biol. Chem.* 269:19848-19858, 1994); and prostate specific antigen (U.S. Patent 5,698,443); surfactant protein B for lung alveoli (Yan et al., *J. Biol. Chem.* 270:24852-24857, 1995); factor VII for liver (Greenberg et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 92:12347-12351, 1995); and survivin for cancer in general (Li et al., *Nature* 396:580-584). Where the vector is an adenovirus, it is contemplated that such tumor-specific promoters can be substituted for the E4 promoter. Because E4 gene products are essential for Ad replication, placing their expression under the control of a tumor-specific promoter should restrict replication of the vector to tumor cells in which the promoter is activated.

Another strategy for restricting replication of ADP-expressing Ad vectors to neoplastic cells is exemplified by the KD1 (SEQ ID NO:1), KD2 (SEQ ID NO:13) and KD3 (SEQ ID NO:2) vectors, whose construction and properties are described in the Examples below. This strategy exploits a pre-existing Ad5 mutant in the E1A gene, named *d1101/1107* (Howe et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.*, 87:5883-5887, 1990), also referred to herein as *d101/07*, and which can only grow well in cancer cells. The role of E1A is to drive cells from the G<sub>0</sub> and G<sub>1</sub> phases of the cell cycle into S-phase. This is achieved by two mechanisms, one involving pRB (and family members), and the other involving p300 and the related protein CBP (DePinho, R.A., *Nature* 391:533-536, 1998). One domain in E1A binds members of the pRB family. pRB normally exists in the cell as a complex with the transcription factor E2F-1 and E2F family members (E2F), tethered via E2F to E2F binding sites in promoters of cells expressed in S-phase. Here, pRB acts as a transcriptional co-repressor. E1A binding to pRB relieves this repression, and causes the release of E2F from pRB/E2F complexes. Free E2F then activates promoters of genes expressed in S-phase, e.g. thymidine kinase, ribonucleotide reductase, etc. Another domain in E1A binds the p300/CBP transcription adaptor protein complex. p300/CBP is a transcriptional co-activator that binds many different transcription factors and accordingly is targeted to promoters. p300/CBP has intrinsic histone acetyltransferase activity. E1A binding to p300/CBP is believed to inhibit this histone acetyltransferase activity, allowing acetylation of histones and repression of transcription (Chakravarti et al., *Cell* 96:393-403, 1999; Hamamori et al., *Cell* 96:405-413, 1999). Conceivably, some of the genes that are repressed as a result of E1A interacting with p300/CBP to play a role in blocking the cell cycle, although this is not known. Cancer cells are cycling, so they have free E2F and presumably some p300/CBP-regulated genes are repressed. Consistent with these ideas, E1A must bind both p300/CBP and the pRB family in order to transform primary cells to a constitutively cycling state (Howe et al., *supra*). The mutant *d101/07* lacks both the p300/CBP- and pRB-binding domains and, as expected, it replicates very poorly in non-dividing "normal" cells or serum-starved cancer cells, but well in growing cancer cells. As described below, the growth of the KD1 and KD3 vectors, which contain the *d101/07* E1A mutation, is very much better in dividing cancer cells as compared to non-dividing cells. Because the *d101/07* mutant is completely defective in oncogenic transformation of rat cells (Howe et al., *supra*), vectors according to the invention that contain this E1A mutation cannot induce cancer in humans (remote as that may be) through an E1A-dependent mechanism.

The invention also includes vectors overexpressing ADP whose replication is restricted to specific tissues by placing expression of one or more proteins essential for



replication under the control of a tissue specific promoter. A number of tissue-specific promoters have been described in the art such as the surfactant protein B promoter which is only active in cells containing the TTF1 transcription factor, i.e., type II alveolar cells (Yan et al., *supra*) the transcriptional regulatory element described in U.S. Patent 5,466,596 to Breitman et al., that directs gene expression specifically in cells of endothelial lineage; prostate specific antigen which is expressed in prostate cells (Rodriguez et al., *supra*); and human alpha-lactalbum gene which is expressed in breast cancer cells (Anderson et al., *Gene Therapy* 6:854-864, 1999). Many other tissue-specific or tissue-preferred enhancer/promoters have been reported (Miller and Whelan, *Human Gene Therapy* 8:803-815, 1997).

Replication of vectors according to the invention can also be controlled by placing one or more genes essential for vector replication under the control of a promoter that is activated by an exogenous inducing agent, such as metals, hormones, antibiotics, and temperature changes. Examples of such inducible promoters include but are not limited to metallothionein promoters, the glucocorticoid promoter, the tetracycline response promoter, and heat shock protein (hsp) promoters such as the hsp 65 and 70 promoters.

The invention also provides compositions comprising a recombinant vector that overexpresses ADP in an amount effective for promoting death of neoplastic cells and a method comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of the vector to a neoplastic cell in a patient. It is believed the compositions and methods of the present invention are useful for killing neoplastic cells of any origin and include neoplastic cells comprising tumors as well as metastatic neoplastic cells.

It is also contemplated that ADP-expressing viral vectors can be administered to neoplastic cells along with a replication-defective virus that expresses an anti-cancer gene product. For example, many replication-defective E1<sup>-</sup> Ad vectors for use in cancer therapy are well characterized. A limitation of replication-defective vectors is that they only synthesize the therapeutic protein in the cell they initially infect, they cannot spread to other cells. Also, since the genome does not replicate, transcription can only occur from the input genomes, and this could be as low as one copy per cell. In contrast, the genome of replication-competent Ad vectors are amplified by about  $10^4$  in the cell that was initially infected, providing more templates for transcription. More amplification is achieved as the vector spreads to other cells. By combining replication-defective viral vectors expressing an anti-cancer gene product with replication-competent viral vectors described herein, it is expected that the result will be template amplification and rapid spread of both vectors to surrounding cells. For example, with Ad-based vectors, the burst size for each vector should be large,  $\sim 10^4$  PFU/cell, so the probability of co-infection of surrounding cells by both vectors

will be high. Thus, both the replication-competent and replication-defective vectors should spread simultaneously through the tumor, providing even more effective anti-cancer therapy.

Expression of the anti-cancer gene product encoded by the replication-defective vector can be under the control of either constitutive, inducible or cell-type specific promoters. The anti-cancer gene product can be any substance that promotes death of a neoplastic cell. The term "gene product" as used herein refers to any biological product or products produced as a result of the biochemical reactions that occur under the control of a gene. The gene product can be, for example, an RNA molecule, a peptide, a protein, or a product produced under the control of an enzyme or other molecule that is the initial product of the gene, i.e., a metabolic product. For example, a gene can first control the synthesis of an RNA molecule which is translated by the action of ribosomes into a prodrug converting enzyme which converts a nontoxic prodrug administered to a cancer patient to a cell-killing agent; the RNA molecule, enzyme, and the cell-killing agent generated by the enzyme are all gene products as the term is used here. Examples of anti-cancer gene products include but are not limited to cell-killing agents such as apoptosis-promoting agents and toxins; prodrug converting enzymes; angiogenesis inhibitors; and immunoregulatory molecules and antigens capable of stimulating an immune response, humoral and/or cellular, against the neoplastic cell.

Apoptosis-promoting agents include but are not limited to the pro-apoptotic members of the BCL-2 family such as BAX, BAD, BID and BIK, as well as antisense molecules which block expression of anti-apoptotic members of the BCL-2 family. Examples of immunoregulatory molecules are cytokines such as tumor necrosis factor, Fas/Apo1/CD95 ligand, tumor necrosis factor related apoptosis inducing ligand, interleukins, macrophage activating factor and interferon  $\gamma$ . Angiogenesis inhibitors include but are not limited to endostatin and angiostatin. Toxins include but are not limited to tumor necrosis factor, lymphotoxin, the plant toxin ricin, which is not toxic to humans due to the lack of ricin receptors in animal cells, and the toxic subunit of bacterial toxins. Examples of pro-drug converting enzymes and pro-drug combinations are described in WO 96/40238 and include: thymidine kinase and acyclovir or gancyclovir; and bacterial cytosine deaminase and 5-fluorocytosine.

The therapeutic or pharmaceutical compositions of the present invention can be administered by any suitable route known in the art including for example by direct injection into a tumor or by other injection routes such as intravenous, subcutaneous, intramuscular, transdermal, intrathecal and intracerebral. Administration can be either rapid as by injection or over a period of time as by slow infusion or administration of slow release formulation.

For treating tissues in the central nervous system, administration can be by injection or infusion into the cerebrospinal fluid (CSF). When it is intended that a recombinant vector of the invention be administered to cells in the central nervous system, administration can be with one or more agents capable of promoting penetration of the vector across the blood-brain barrier. Preferably, vectors of the invention are administered with a carrier such as liposomes or polymers containing a targeting moiety to limit delivery of the vector to targeted cells. Examples of targeting moieties include but are not limited to antibodies, ligands or receptors to specific cell surface molecules.

Compositions according to the invention can be employed in the form of pharmaceutical preparations. Such preparations are made in a manner well known in the pharmaceutical art. One preferred preparation utilizes a vehicle of physiological saline solution, but it is contemplated that other pharmaceutically acceptable carriers such as physiological concentrations of other non-toxic salts, five percent aqueous glucose solution, sterile water or the like may also be used. It may also be desirable that a suitable buffer be present in the composition. Such solutions can, if desired, be lyophilized and stored in a sterile ampoule ready for reconstitution by the addition of sterile water for ready injection. The primary solvent can be aqueous or alternatively non-aqueous.

The carrier can also contain other pharmaceutically-acceptable excipients for modifying or maintaining the pH, osmolarity, viscosity, clarity, color, sterility, stability, rate of dissolution, or odor of the formulation. Similarly, the carrier may contain still other pharmaceutically-acceptable excipients for modifying or maintaining release or absorption or penetration across the blood-brain barrier. Such excipients are those substances usually and customarily employed to formulate dosages for parenteral administration in either unit dosage or multi-dose form or for direct infusion into the cerebrospinal fluid by continuous or periodic infusion.

It is also contemplated that certain formulations containing ADP-expressing vectors are to be administered orally. Such formulations are preferably encapsulated and formulated with suitable carriers in solid dosage forms. Some examples of suitable carriers, excipients, and diluents include lactose, dextrose, sucrose, sorbitol, mannitol, starches, gum acacia, calcium phosphate, alginates, calcium silicate, microcrystalline cellulose, polyvinylpyrrolidone, cellulose, gelatin, syrup, methyl cellulose, methyl- and propylhydroxybenzoates, talc, magnesium, stearate, water, mineral oil, and the like. The formulations can additionally include lubricating agents, wetting agents, emulsifying and suspending agents, preserving agents, sweetening agents or flavoring agents. The compositions may be formulated so as to provide rapid, sustained, or delayed release of the

active ingredients after administration to the patient by employing procedures well known in the art. The formulations can also contain substances that diminish proteolytic degradation and promote absorption such as, for example, surface active agents.

The specific dose is calculated according to the approximate body weight or body surface area of the patient or the volume of body space to be occupied. The dose will also be calculated dependent upon the particular route of administration selected. Further refinement of the calculations necessary to determine the appropriate dosage for treatment is routinely made by those of ordinary skill in the art. Such calculations can be made without undue experimentation by one skilled in the art. Exact dosages are determined in conjunction with standard dose-response studies. It will be understood that the amount of the composition actually administered will be determined by a practitioner, in the light of the relevant circumstances including the condition or conditions to be treated, the choice of composition to be administered, the age, weight, and response of the individual patient, the severity of the patient's symptoms, and the chosen route of administration. Dose administration can be repeated depending upon the pharmacokinetic parameters of the dosage formulation and the route of administration used.

The invention also contemplates passively immunizing patients who have been treated with a viral vector overexpressing ADP. Passive immunization can include administering to the patient antiserum raised against the viral vector, or gamma-globulin or vector-specific purified polyclonal or monoclonal antibodies isolated from the antiserum. Preferably, the patient is passively immunized after a time period sufficient for the viral vector to replicate in and spread through the tumor.

Preferred embodiments of the invention are described in the following examples. Other embodiments within the scope of the claims herein will be apparent to one skilled in the art from consideration of the specification or practice of the invention as disclosed herein. It is intended that the specification, together with the examples, be considered exemplary only, with the scope and spirit of the invention being indicated by the claims which follow the examples.

#### Example 1

This example illustrates the construction and characterization of the KD1 and KD3 anti-cancer vectors.

To construct KD1, the inventors deleted the entire E3 region of a unique plasmid, leaving behind only a unique PacI site for cloning. The starting plasmid was pCRII, purchased from Invitrogen, containing the Ad5 BamHIA fragment having a deletion of all the

E3 genes; the E3 deletion is identical to that for KD1 and GZ3, the sequences of which are given in SEQ ID NO:1 and SEQ ID NO:4, respectively. The ADP gene from Ad5 was cloned into the PacI site, then built into the E3 region of the genome of the Ad5 E1A mutant named *dl01/07*. This was done by co-transfecting into human embryonic kidney 293 cells the  
5    aforementioned BamHIA fragment containing the ADP gene together with the overlapping EcoRIA restriction fragment obtained from *dl01/07*. Complete viral genomes are formed within the cell by overlap recombination between the Ad sequences in the BamHIA fragment in the plasmid and the EcoRIA fragment. KD3 was constructed in the same way except the E3 gene for the 12.5K protein was retained in the starting plasmid. A vector named KD2,  
10    which marginally overexpress ADP, was also prepared. Plaques of each recombinant Ad were picked, screened, purified, expanded into CsCl-banded stocks, sequenced, titered, and characterized. GZ1 and GZ3 are Ad vectors that are identical to KD1 and KD3, respectively, except that GZ1 and GZ3 have wild-type E1A sequences as found in AD5 or in the Ad5 mutant *dl309*. GZ1 and GZ3 were constructed as described for KD1 and KD3 except that the  
15    EcoRIA fragment of Ad5 was used for GZ1 and GZ3.

KD1 and KD3 were characterized in cell culture by infecting the human A549 lung carcinoma cell line with high titer ( $1-8 \times 10^{10}$  plaque forming units [PFU] per ml) virus stocks of one of these recombinant vectors, or with one of the control viruses *dl01/07*, *dl309*, *dl327*, and Ad5 (wt). Fifty PFU per cell were used for each virus. The descriptions of these viruses  
20    as well as some other viruses used in these examples are presented in Table 1.

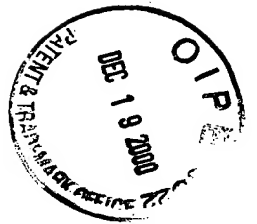


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Table 1: Description of mutations in viruses:

Virus	RNA			REGION	E4
	E1	VA	E3		
<i>dl1101/1107</i>	<i>dl1101</i> : deletion of Ad5 bp 569-634 <i>dl1107</i> : deletion of Ad5 bp 890-928	From <i>dl309</i> deletion of Ad5 bp 10594-10595	From <i>dl309</i> deletion of Ad5 bp 28597-28602; deletion-substitution Ad5 bp 3005-30750, insert 642 bp DNA of unknown origin	wild type	
KD1	<i>dl1101</i> : deletion of Ad5 bp 569-634 <i>dl1107</i> : deletion of Ad5 bp 890-928	From <i>dl309</i> deletion of Ad5 bp 10594-10595	deletion of Ad5 bp 27858-2760, TAA inserted; deletion of Ad5 bp 27982-28134; deletion of Ad5 bp 28395-29397, insert CCTTAATTAAA (SEQ ID NO:21); deletion of Ad5 bp 29783-30883, insert TTAATTAAAGG (SEQ ID NO:22)	wild type	
KD2	<i>dl1101</i> : deletion of Ad5 bp 569-634 <i>dl1107</i> : deletion of Ad5 bp 890-928	From <i>dl309</i> deletion of Ad5 bp 10594-10595	<i>dl309</i> background, gp19K mutated deletion of Ad5 bp 28597-28602; deletion-substitution Ad5 bp 3005-30750, insert 642 bp DNA of unknown origin; deletion of Ad5 bp 28788-28789, insert TTAATTAA (SEQ ID NO:23)	wild type	
KD3	<i>dl1101</i> : deletion of Ad5 bp 569-634 <i>dl1107</i> : deletion of Ad5 bp 890-928	From <i>dl309</i> deletion of Ad5 bp 10594-10595	deletion of Ad5 bp 28598-29397; deletion of Ad5 bp 29783-30469	wild type	
GZ1	wt	wild type	deletion of Ad5 bp 27858-2760, TAA inserted; deletion of Ad5 bp 27982-28134; deletion of Ad5 bp 28395-29397, insert CCTTAATTAAA (SEQ ID NO:24); deletion of Ad5 bp 29783-30883, insert TTAATTAAAGG (SEQ ID NO:25)	wild type	



GZ3	wild type	wild type	deletion of Ad5 bp 28598-29397; deletion of Ad5 bp 29783-30469	wild type
d11101/1107-SPB	d11101: deletion of Ad5 bp 569-634 d11107: deletion of Ad5 bp 890-928	From d1309 deletion of Ad5 bp 10594-10595	From d1309 deletion of Ad5 bp 28597-28602; deletion-substitution Ad5 bp 3005-30750, insert 642 bp DNA of unknown origin	E4 promoter deletion-substitution: deletion of Ad5 bp 35623-35775, insert SP-B 500 promoter flanked by BstI 1071 sites
KD1-SPB	d11101: deletion of Ad5 bp 569-634 d11107: deletion of Ad5 bp 890-928	From d1309 deletion of Ad5 bp 10594-10595	deletion of Ad5 bp 27848-2760, TAA inserted; deletion of Ad5 bp 27982-28134; deletion of Ad5 bp 28395-29397, insert CCTTAATTAAA (SEQ ID NO:26); deletion of Ad5 bp 29783-30883, insert TTAATTAAAGG (SEQ ID NO:27)	E4 promoter deletion-substitution: deletion of Ad5 bp 35623-35775, insert SP-B 500 promoter flanked by BstI 1071 sites
KD3-SPB	d11101: deletion of Ad5 bp 569-634 d11107: deletion of Ad5 bp 890-928	From d1309 deletion of Ad5 bp 10594-10595	deletion of Ad5 bp 28598-29397; deletion of Ad5 bp 29783-30469	E4 promoter deletion-substitution: deletion of Ad5 bp 35623-35775, insert SP-B 500 promoter flanked by BstI 1071 sites

Using a polymerase chain reaction (PCR)-based protocol, an in-frame stop codon was introduced into the gene for the E3-gp19K protein in the E3 region of the Ad5 mutant dl309 (Jones and Shenk, *Cell* 17:683-689, 1979). The mutagenesis was conducted using a SunI-Bst1107I fragment, nucleotides 28,390 to 29,012 in the Ad5 genome, which was then substituted for the equivalent fragment in dl309. dl01/07 is the parent for KD1 and KD3. In turn, the Ad5 mutant named dl309 is the parent of dl01/07, i.e. dl309 is identical to dl01/07 except that dl309 does not have the E1A mutation. Both dl01/07 and dl309 have deletions of the genes for the E3 RID $\alpha$ , RID $\beta$  and 14.7K proteins but retain the gene for ADP. The Ad5 mutant dl327 has wild-type E1A, it lacks the gene for ADP, and it lacks all other E3 genes except the one for the 12.5K protein.

At 24 and 36 hours post-infection (h p.i.), proteins were extracted from the A549 cells and analyzed for ADP by immunoblot using a rabbit antiserum against ADP (Tollefson et al., *J. Virol.* 66:3633-3642, 1992). The results are shown in Figure 2. Much more ADP was detected at 24 and 36 h p.i. in KD1- and KD3-infected cells than in cells infected with dl01/07. Also, much more ADP was synthesized by GZ1 and GZ3 than dl309 or the other viruses. Most importantly, KD1, KD3, GZ1, and GZ3 expressed much more ADP at 24 h p.i. than did dl01/07 or dl309 (Fig. 2). This result is consistent with an observation discussed below that the cells infected with KD1, KD3, GZ1, or GZ3 lyse faster, and that these viruses spread from cell to cell faster than dl01/07 or dl309. It is noteworthy that KD1, KD3, GZ1, and GZ3 express much more ADP at 24 and 36 h p.i. than the Ad5 mutant dl1520 (Fig. 2); dl1520 is the original name given to ONYX-015 (Heise et al., *Nature Medicine* 3:639-645, 1997). As expected, no ADP was detected in cells infected with pm734.1 (Fig. 2), a mutant that lacks amino acids 1 to 48 in ADP (Tollefson et al., *J. Virol.* 70:2296-2306, 1996). Expression of the E1A proteins by dl01/07, KD1, KD2, and KD3 was slightly less than by Ad5, dl309, or dl327, and as expected from the dl01/07 deletion, the proteins were smaller (Fig. 3A). dl327 is isogenic with dl324 (Thimmappaya et al., 1982 *Cell* 31:543-51, 1983), and it lacks the gene for ADP and all other E3 proteins except the 12.5K protein.

The amount of ADP detected in the KD1 and KD3 infected cells is significantly higher than the amount detected in the dl309 infected cells (Fig. 2). If one takes into consideration the fact that the viruses with the E1A mutation replicate somewhat slower, as evidenced in by the delayed appearance of the late proteins (Fig. 3B), it is clear that KD1 and KD3 express much more ADP per viral genome present in the cell than dl309. This finding is supported by the fact that when A549 cells are coinfectd with a virus containing the E1A mutation and dl327, which lacks ADP but has wild-type E1A, the replication rates of the E1A mutant viruses speed up, as indicated by earlier appearance of late proteins (compare Figs. 3B



and 3D). Thus, *dl327* complements the E1A mutation. In conclusion, these experiments demonstrate that ADP is dramatically overexpressed by KD1, KD3, GZ1, and GZ3. ADP is marginally overexpressed by KD2 (not shown).

5

## Example 2

This example illustrates that KD1 and KD3 lyse cells more rapidly and spread from cell-to-cell faster than other adenoviruses.

The ability of KD1 and KD3 to lyse cells was examined by a trypan blue exclusion cell viability assay which was performed essentially as described by Tollefson et al., *J. Virol.* 70:2296-2306, 1996. In brief, A549 cells were mock-infected or infected with 20 PFU/cell of KD1, KD3, *dl01/07*, *dl327* or *dl309*. At various days p.i., the number of viable cells was determined using a hemacytometer (600 to 1000 cells were counted per time point) and the results are shown in Fig. 4.

Only 25% of the KD1-infected cells and 9% of the KD3-infected cells were alive at 5 days p.i. as compared to 44% of cells infected with *dl01/07*, which has the same E1A mutation as KD1 and KD3. The KD1 and KD3 vectors also lysed cells faster than *dl309*, which has a wild-type E1A region. When infected with *dl327* (ADP<sup>+</sup>, E1A<sup>+</sup>), 94% of the cells were alive after 5 days. When cell lysis was estimated by release of lactate dehydrogenase, KD1 and KD3 once again lysed cells faster than *dl01/07* and *dl309*, and *dl327* caused little cell lysis (data not shown). Thus, ADP is required for efficient cell lysis, and over-expression of ADP increases the rate of cell lysis.

As another means to measure cell lysis and to examine virus replication in cancer cells, separate groups of A549 cells were infected with 20 PFU/cell of KD1, KD3, *dl01/07*, or *dl309* and the amount of intracellular and extracellular virus was determined by plaque assay on A549 cells. At 2 days p.i., the total amount of virus formed in each group was similar,  $2-4 \times 10^8$  PFU/ml, indicating that replication of all the viruses is similar. However, when the ratio of extracellular to intracellular virus was calculated, the value for KD1 and KD3 was 2-3 logs higher than for Ad5, *dl309*, or *dl01/07* (data not shown). Thus, virus is released much more rapidly from cells infected with KD1 and KD3, which overexpress ADP, than with viruses expressing wild-type amounts of ADP.

The ability of KD1 and KD3 to spread from cell-to-cell was measured in a "cell spreading" assay. In this assay monolayers of A549 cells in a 48 well culture dish were mock-infected or infected with  $10^{-3}$ ,  $10^{-2}$ ,  $10^{-1}$ ,  $10^0$ , or 10 PFU/cell of *dl327*, *dl309*, Ad5, *dl01/07*, KD1 or KD3. At low PFU/cell, the viruses must go through two or three rounds of replication in order to infect every cell in the monolayer. At 1.0 and 10 PFU/cell, the

monolayer should be destroyed by the virus that initially infected the cells. To assess the amount of spread in the monolayers by 7 days p.i., crystal violet, which stains live cells but not dead cells, was added to the monolayers. The results are shown in Fig. 5.

Remarkably, at 7 days p.i., the monolayer was virtually eliminated by KD1 and KD3 at  $10^{-3}$  PFU/cell, whereas 1.0 PFU/cell was required with *dl*01/07, *dl*309 and Ad5. This result attests to the potency of ADP in mediating cell lysis and virus spread in A549 cells. KD1 and KD3 are also more effective than *dl*01/07 in killing other types of human cancer cell lines (most purchased from the American Type Culture Collection [ATCC]) as determined in this cell spreading assay. KD1 and/or KD3 killed HeLa (cervical carcinoma), DU145 (prostate), and pC3 (prostate) cells at  $10^{-2}$  PFU/cell, ME-180 (cervix) and Hep3B (liver) at  $10^{-1}$  PFU/cell, and U118 (glioblastoma) and U373 (glioblastoma) at 10 PFU/cell. From 10- to 100-fold more *dl*01/07 was required to kill these cells (data not shown). These results indicate that KD1 and KD3 may be effective against many types of cancer.

An important aspect of the finding that ADP overexpressing vectors lyse cells at very low multiplicities of infection is that the multiplicity of infection in human tumors is likely to be low at sites distal to the site of vector injection or distal to blood vessels that carry the vector to the tumor. Thus, ADP overexpressing vectors have an advantage over vectors that express less ADP or no ADP at all.

### Example 3

This example illustrates that KD1 and KD3 replicate poorly in non-growing non-cancerous cells. The replication phenotype of KD1 and KD3 was evaluated using "normal" HEL-299 human fibroblast cells, either growing in 10% serum or rendered quiescent using 0.1% serum. All Ads should replicate well in growing cells, but viruses with the *dl*01/07 E1A mutation should do poorly in quiescent cells because E1A is required to drive them out of G<sub>0</sub>. *dl*309, which has wild-type E1A, should replicate well in both growing and growth-arrested cells.

Cells were infected with 100 PFU/cell of KD1, KD3, *dl*01/07, or *dl*309. At different days p.i., virus was extracted and titered. In 10% serum, KD1, KD3, and *dl*01/07 replicated well, reaching titers of  $10^6$ - $10^7$  PFU/ml, only slightly less than *dl*309 (Fig. 6). However, in quiescent cells, replication of KD1, KD3, and *dl*01/07 was 1.5-2 logs lower than in growing cells, ranging from  $10^4$  to  $2 \times 10^5$  PFU/ml. The titer of *dl*309 reached  $10^7$  PFU/ml, nearly the level achieved in growing cells. At 10 days p.i., quiescent HEL-299 cell monolayers infected with 100 PFU/cell of KD1, KD3, or *dl*01/07 were intact, whereas those infected with *dl*309 or *dl*327, which have wild-type E1A, showed strong typical Ad cytopathic effect indicative of

cell death (data not shown). Thus, replication of KD1 and KD3 is severely restricted to growing cell lines.

The restriction associated with the *dI01/07* E1A mutation was also tested in primary human cells (purchased from Clonetics) growing as monolayers. Bronchial epithelial cells (Fig. 7) and small airway epithelial cells were not killed by 10 PFU/cell of KD1, KD3, or *dI01/07* at 5 days p.i., whereas they were killed by 10 PFU/cell of *dI309* or *dI327* (data not shown). Lung endothelial cells also were not killed after 10 days by KD1, KD3, or *dI01/07* at 10 PFU/cell, but they were killed by 1 PFU/cell of *dI309*. These monolayers were subconfluent when initially infected, then grew to confluency. The exciting result here is that although these primary cells were growing, they did not support replication in this time frame and were not killed by KD1 or KD3. Thus, it is believed these vectors will be restricted to cancerous cells, and will have little to no effect on cells such as basal cells that are normally dividing in the body. In addition, it is unlikely that KD1 and KD3 will affect dividing leukocytes because such cells are poorly infected by Ad.

In summary, the above experiments demonstrate that KD1 and KD3 lyse cancer cells, spread from cell-to-cell rapidly, and replicate poorly in quiescent and non-cancerous cells. These properties should make them useful in anti-cancer therapy.

#### Example 4

This example illustrates that KD1 and KD3 inhibit the growth of human tumors in an animal model.

We could not evaluate mouse or rat tumors in normal mice or rats because they are totally non-permissive. Human cancer cell lines growing in nude mice have been used by Onyx Pharmaceuticals (Richmond, CA) to evaluate the efficacy of ONYX-015, an Ad vector lacking expression of the E1B 55 kDa protein (Heise et al., *Nature Med.* 3:639-645, 1997). We have found that A549 cells, which were used in many of our cell culture studies, form excellent rapidly growing solid tumors when injected subcutaneously into nude mice. The average tumor reaches ca. 500  $\mu$ l in four weeks, and is encapsulated, vascularized, and attached to the mouse skin (usually) or muscle.

Nude mice were inoculated into each hind flank with  $2 \times 10^7$  A549 cells. After 1 week tumors had formed, ranging in size from about 20  $\mu$ l to 50  $\mu$ l. Individual tumors were injected three days later, and at subsequent weeks for 4 weeks (total of 5 injections), with 50  $\mu$ l of buffer or 50  $\mu$ l of buffer containing  $5 \times 10^7$  PFU of *dI309*, *dI01/07*, KD1, KD3, or *pm734.1*, with a total virus dose per tumor of  $3 \times 10^8$  PFU. The mutant *pm734.1* lacks ADP activity due to two nonsense mutations in the gene for ADP, but all other Ad proteins are

expected to be synthesized at wild-type levels (Tollefson et al., *J. Virol.* 70:2296-2306, 1996). The efficacy of each virus (or buffer) was tested on six tumors. At weekly intervals, the length (L) and width (W) of tumors were measured using a Mitutoyo digital caliper. Tumor volumes were calculated by multiplying  $L \times W \times W/2$ . This value was divided by the tumor volume at the time of the initial virus injection, the fold-increase in tumor growth was calculated, and the average for the six tumors was graphed.

As shown in Fig. 8A, tumors that received buffer continued to grow, increasing about 14-fold by 5 weeks. In contrast, tumors injected with *dl309*, which expresses normal amounts of ADP and lacks the E3 RID and 14.7K and proteins, only grew about 2.5-fold by 5 weeks. With *pm734.1*, which lacks ADP, the tumors grew as well as those that received buffer. Thus, *dl309* markedly decreases the rate of tumor growth, and ADP is required for this decrease. Tumors inoculated with *dl01/07* grew about 8-fold over 5 weeks. Since *dl01/07* is identical to *dl309* except for the E1A mutation, this result indicates that the E1A mutation significantly reduces the ability of Ad to prevent growth of the tumors. This effect is probably due to a reduction in virus replication in the tumors resulting in lower ADP expression, but it could also reflect other properties of E1A in the tumor cells, e.g. the inability of the mutant E1A proteins to induce apoptosis. Most importantly, tumors inoculated with KD1 or KD3 only grew about 2.5-fold. Thus, the overexpression of ADP by KD1 and KD3 allows KD1 and KD3 to reduce tumor growth to a rate markedly slower than *dl01/07* (their parental control virus), and even to a rate similar to that of *dl309*.

The finding that KD1 and KD3 are as effective as wild-type Ad (i.e. *dl309*) in reducing the rate of A549 tumor growth is highly significant in the context of cancer treatment, inasmuch as KD1 and KD3 are restricted to cancer cells whereas wild-type Ad does not have such a restriction.

The tumors in Fig. 8A received five injections of vectors, but only one dose of vector, in this case  $5 \times 10^8$  of each of KD3 or GZ3, is sufficient to significantly reduce the rate of A549 tumor growth (Fig. 8B).

We have also found that KD1 and KD3 reduce the rate of growth in nude mice of a human liver cancer cell line, Hep3B cells. These cells form rapidly growing tumors that are highly vascularized. Nude mice were inoculated into each hind flank with  $1 \times 10^7$  of Hep3B cells. After tumors reached about 100  $\mu$ l, they were injected twice per week for 3 weeks with 50  $\mu$ l of buffer or  $5 \times 10^7$  PFU of KD1, KD3, or *dl309*. There were typically 8-10 tumors per test virus. The tumor sizes were measured and the fold increase in size at 0 to 3.5 following the initial virus injection was graphed as described above for the A549 tumors. Tumors that received buffer alone grew 9-fold over 3 weeks and were projected to grow about 12-fold

over 3.5 weeks (after 3 weeks the mice had to be sacrificed because the tumors were becoming too large) (Fig. 9). Tumors that received KD1 or KD3 grew about 4-fold, establishing that KD1 and KD3 reduce the growth of Hep3B tumors in nude mice. Tumors that were injected with *dl309* grew 2-fold (Fig. 9). The finding that KD1 and KD3 were somewhat less effective than *dl309* is probably due to the fact that they do not grow as well as *dl309* in Hep3B cells, as indicated by a cell spread assay in culture (data not shown). In any case, the important points are that KD1 and KD3 are effective against the Hep3B tumors, and that they contain the E1A mutation that limits their replication to cancer cells.

These results point to the potency of ADP as an anti-tumor agent when expressed in an Ad vector. It is highly probable that KD1 and KD3 will provide significant clinical benefit when used to infect tumors growing in humans.

#### Example 5

This example illustrates the use of replication-defective Ad vectors in combination with KD1 or KD3.

It is well established that replication-competent (RC) viruses complement replication-defective (RD) mutants. That is, when the same cell is infected, the competent virus will supply the protein(s) that cannot be made from the mutant genome, and both viruses will grow. To test the ability of KD1 and KD3 to complement RD viruses, two RD vectors expressing  $\beta$ -galactosidase were constructed. The first, named Ad- $\beta$ -gal, has a cDNA encoding  $\beta$ -gal under the control of the Rous Sarcoma Virus promoter substituted for the deleted E1 region. Ad- $\beta$ -gal also has the E3 region deleted, including the gene for ADP. The second, named Ad- $\beta$ -gal/FasL is identical to Ad- $\beta$ -gal, except that it also expresses murine FasL from the human cytomegalovirus promoter/enhancer. These vectors were constructed by overlap recombination in human 293 cells that constitutively express the Ad E1A and E1B genes and complement replication of the E1-minus vectors.

These RD vectors should infect and express  $\beta$ -gal in A549 cells, but should not replicate because the E1A proteins are lacking. However, the vectors should replicate when cells are co-infected with RC Ads. To prove this, A549 cells were infected with 10 PFU/cell of Ad- $\beta$ -gal alone, or with 10 PFU/cell of Ad- $\beta$ -gal plus 10 PFU/cell of KD1, KD3, *dl01/07*, *dl309*, or *dl327*. At 2 days p.i., virus was extracted and Ad- $\beta$ -gal titers determined by  $\beta$ -gal expression in A549 cells. The yields are shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2**

Virus	Yield (blue plaques per ml)
Ad- $\beta$ -gal	$1 \times 10^2$
Ad- $\beta$ -gal + KD1	$2 \times 10^5$
Ad- $\beta$ -gal + KD3	$3 \times 10^5$
Ad- $\beta$ -gal + <i>dl</i> 01/07	$4 \times 10^4$
Ad- $\beta$ -gal + <i>dl</i> 309	$3 \times 10^5$
Ad- $\beta$ -gal + <i>dl</i> 327	$3.0 \times 10^5$

The data in Table 2 indicate that the complementing viruses increased the yield of Ad- $\beta$ -gal by about  $10^3$ .

5        A key feature of KD1 and KD3 is that they spread from cell-to-cell faster than other Ads. Accordingly, they should complement the spread of Ad- $\beta$ -gal. To test this, an infectious center assay was conducted. A549 cells were infected with Ad- $\beta$ -gal plus KD1, KD3, or *dl*01/07. After 2 h, cells were collected, diluted, and seeded onto monolayers of fresh A549 cells. After 4 days, the cells were stained with X-gal and the results are shown in  
10    Fig. 10.

With Ad- $\beta$ -gal alone, only the originally infected cell (before seeding) should be stained, and the vector should not spread to other cells on the seeded monolayer. This was indeed the case. In monolayers seeded with A549 cells infected with Ad- $\beta$ -gal alone (dish shown in the top left of Fig. 10A) contained a number of individual blue cells (not visible in  
15    the print); examples are shown in the enlarged view Fig. 10B. However, when the monolayers were seeded with A549 cells coinfecting with Ad- $\beta$ -gal and KD1 or KD3, there were numerous "comets" of blue cells (Fig. 10A). Each comet represents Ad- $\beta$ -gal which has spread from one initially-infected cell. Most of the cells within a comet were stained with X-gal (Fig. 10C). Comets were also observed with *dl*01/07, but not to the extent of KD1 and  
20    KD3 (Fig. 10A). With *dl*327 (ADP), there was little spread from the originally infected cell (data not shown). In summary, KD1 and KD3 not only complement the replication of Ad- $\beta$ -gal, they also enhance its rapid spread.

It is expected that KD1 and KD3 will also complement and enhance the spread of RD vectors expressing anti-cancer therapeutic gene products, and this expectation can be readily

verified using the Ad- $\beta$ -gal/FasL in replication and infectious center assays as described above.

KD1 and KD3 not only complement the replication of RD vectors in cell culture, they also do so in Hep3B tumors growing in the hind flanks of nude mice. The RD vector used was AdLuc, an Ad that lacks the E1 and E3 regions, and has inserted into the E1 region an expression cassette where the firefly luciferase gene is expressed from the Rous Sarcoma Virus promoter (Harrod et al., *Human Gene Therapy* 9:1885-1898, 1998). The Hep3B tumors were injected with  $1 \times 10^7$  PFU of AdLuc plus buffer, or  $1 \times 10^7$  PFU of AdLuc plus  $5 \times 10^7$  PFU of KD1, KD3, *dl01/07*, or *dl309*. After 2 weeks, mice were sacrificed and tumors excised. Proteins were extracted from the tumors and luciferase activity determined using a luminometer. The luciferase counts per tumor were 6,800 for AdLuc plus buffer, 113,500 for KD1, and 146,900 for KD3 (Fig. 11). Thus, KD3 and KD1 respectively caused a 22-fold and 17-fold increase in luciferase activity. This increase could be due to elevated synthesis of luciferase in cells that were initially coinfecting the AdLuc and KD1 or KD3, and it could also be due to spread of AdLuc from cell to cell in the tumor as mediated by KD1 or KD3.

In summary, infecting a tumor with a replication-competent ADP-overexpressing vector according to the invention together with a RD vector expressing an anti-cancer gene product should greatly increase the amount of anti-cancer protein synthesized in the tumor thereby increasing the ability of the replication-defective vector to promote destruction of the tumor.

### Example 6

This example illustrates the construction and characterization of a recombinant Ad vector according to the invention which is replication-restricted to cancerous type II alveolar cells.

As demonstrated above, the *dl01/07* mutation in KD1 and KD3 limits growth of these vectors to cancer cells. To further restrict their replication phenotype, the E4 promoter in each virus was deleted and replaced by the surfactant protein B (SPB) promoter to produce vectors named KD1-SPB (SEQ ID NO:14), KD3-SPB (SEQ ID NO:15), and *dl01/07*-SPB (SEQ ID NO:16). The SPB promoter is only active in cells containing the TTF1 transcription factor, which has thus far been found primarily in type II alveolar cells of the human lung (Lazzaro et al., *Development* 113:1093-1104, 1991). Thus, KD1-SPB, KD3-SPB, and *dl01/07*-SPB should be severely restricted to cancerous type II alveolar cells of the human lung. Many lung cancers are of this type.

The KD1-SPB and KD3-SPB vectors were prepared as follows. The E4 promoter is located at the right end of the Ad genome (Fig. 1). Using a pCRII-based plasmid (Invitrogen) containing the Ad5 DNA sequences from the BamHI site (59 map units) to the right hand end of the genome, and using a PCR-based protocol, nearly all the transcription factor binding sites were deleted from the E4 promoter Ad5 base pairs 35,623 to 35,775 and replaced with a 500 base pair fragment containing the SPB promoter (Yan et al., *J. Biol. Chem.* 270:24852-24857, 1995). The final plasmids contain the E4-SPB substitution in the E4 region and the *dl01/07*, KD1, or KD3 versions of the E3 region, respectively, for the viruses *dl01/07*-SPF, KD1-SPB, and KD3-SPB. These plasmids were co-transfected into 293 cells with a fragment containing the left portion of the genome of *dl01/07*, and plaques were allowed to develop. Plaques were screened for the expected features, purified, then expanded into a stock.

The A549-TTF1 cell line was developed in order to test the prediction that replication of *dl01/07*-SPB, KD1-SPB, and KD3-SPB would be restricted to cancerous cells expressing the TTF1 transcription factor. These cells were co-transfected with two plasmids, one in which TTF1 is expressed from the CMV promoter, and the other coding for resistance to neomycin. Resistant clones were isolated and shown to express TTF1 activity as determined by transient transfection with a plasmid expressing chloramphenicol acetyltransferase from the TTF1-requiring surfactant protein C promoter.

KD1-SPB and KD1 were subjected to a standard plaque development assay on A549-TTF1 cells and parental A549 cells. The results are shown in Fig. 12. With KD1-SPB on A549 cells, plaques were not visible after 8 days, only about 4% of the final number of plaques were seen after 10 days, and about 50% of final plaques were seen after 12 days. With KD1-SPB on A549-TTF1 cells, plaques were visible after 6 days, and about 60% of plaques were seen after 10 days. Thus, as expected, KD1-SPB grew significantly faster on the cells containing TTF1. KD1 formed plaques more quickly than KD1-SPB on both A549 and A549-TTF1 cells, indicating that the E4 promoter-SPB substitution is not as effective as the wild-type E4 promoter in inducing Ad replication. However, this difference between KD1-SPB and KD1 on A549-TTF1 cells is tolerable, with KD1-SPB delayed only about 1 day. Curiously, the final titer obtained for all virus stocks by day 16 was similar, indicating that A549 cells may contain a very small amount of endogenous TTF1 activity. It is predicted that KD3-SPB and *dl01/07*-SPB will behave similarly to KD1-SPB when grown in A549-TTF1 cells and A549 cells.

The restriction of KD1-SPB to cells containing TTF1 was further examined in a cell spread assay using H441 cells, a TTF1-expressing human pulmonary adenocarcinoma cell line (Yan et al., *supra*), and Hep3B cells, a liver cancer cell line not expected to express



TTF1. Culture dish wells containing H441 or Hep3B cells were infected with KD1-SPB or KD1 at multiplicities ranging from 10 to  $10^{-4}$  PFU/cell. The H441 and Hep3B cells were stained with crystal violet at 5 days and 8 days p.i., respectively. KD1-SPB and KD1 grew and spread equally well on H441 cells, causing destruction of the monolayer at  $10^{-1}$  PFU per cell (Fig. 13). (Some of the H441 monolayer has peeled off in the well with KD1-SPB at  $10^{-2}$  PFU per cell, and in the wells with KD1 and KD1-SPB at  $10^{-4}$  PFU per cell; this occasionally occurs in cell spread assays, and it does not reflect virus infection). With Hep3B cells, KD1 grew and spread very much better than KD1-SPB, with  $10^{-2}$  PFU per cell of KD1 causing more destruction of the monolayer as 1.0 PFU per cell of KD1-SPB (Fig. 13).

In summary, this example demonstrates that a replication-competent Ad, which replicates well on cells expressing the appropriate transcription factor, can be constructed with a tissue-specific promoter substituted in place of the E4 promoter. This methodology should be applicable to many other tissue specific and cell type specific promoters. One possibility would be a liver-specific promoter. Another possibility would be to use the E2F promoter, or another promoter with E2F sites, inasmuch as that promoter would be active only in cells such as cancer cells that have free E2F. A third possibility would be to use a regulatable promoter, e.g. the synthetic tetracycline response promoter (Massie et al., *J. Virol.* 72:2289-2296, 1998), where the activity of the promoter is controlled by the level of tetracycline or a tetracyclin analog in the patient.

#### Example 7

This example illustrates the construction and characterization of vectors which overexpress ADP and are not replication restricted.

As demonstrated above, the *dI01/07* E1A mutation in KD1 and KD3 is attenuating, inhibiting growth in non-dividing and even in dividing primary human epithelial and endothelial cells. Ads with this mutation are able to replicate well in dividing cancer cells. However, replication of such E1A mutants is not as efficient as, e.g. *dI309* which has a wild-type E1A gene. For instance, the rate of replication of *dI01/07*, as determined by the rate at which plaques develop, is reduced such that *dI01/07* plaques appear one day later than those of *dI309* (data not shown). This delay is due in part to a delay in expression of Ad late genes (see Fig. 3). The idea that the *dI01/07* mutation retards the rate of replication in A549 cells is further supported by the data in Fig. 8A, where *dI01/07* did not prevent tumor growth nearly as well as *dI309*. Despite this negative effect of the *dI01/07* E1A mutation, there are theoretical and practical aspects of having this mutation in the KD1 and KD3 vectors, as has been discussed. Nevertheless, one can easily imagine scenarios (e.g. patients with terminal

cancer) where the ability of an Ad vector to destroy the tumor supercedes the requirement that the vector be totally restricted to tumor cells. In such cases, it would be advantageous to have vectors similar to KD1 and KD3, but with the wild-type E1A gene. The rates at which such vectors express their genes, lyse cells, and spread from cell to cell should be higher than those of KD1 and KD3. Such vectors might cause some damage to non-cancerous cells and tissue, but this is also true for other modes of anti-cancer treatment such as surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy.

In light of these considerations, vectors named GZ1 and GZ3 have been constructed that are identical to KD1 and KD3, respectively, except they have a wild-type E1A region. These vectors were constructed by overlap recombination in A549 cells. The left hand fragment contained the wild-type E1A region of Ad5, and the right end fragment contained the E3 modifications of KD1 or KD3. Plaques were picked, analyzed for the expected genotype, plaque-purified, and expanded into CsCl-banded stocks. The titers of these stocks on A549 cells were  $2.9 \times 10^{10}$  PFU/ml for GZ1 and  $1.6 \times 10^{11}$  PFU/ml for GZ3. Thus, these vectors can be grown into high titer stocks comparable to wild-type Ad. The GZ1 and GZ3 plaques are larger and appear much sooner than the plaques for *dl309*. Large rapidly-appearing plaques reflect the ability of Ad to lyse cells and spread from cell-to-cell (Tollefson et al., *J. Virol.* 70:2296-2306, 1996; Tollefson et al., *Virology* 220:152-162, 1996), and this property, as discussed, is due to the function of ADP.

The rate of plaque appearance can be quantitated in a plaque development assay (Tollefson et al., *supra*). Here, a typical plaque assay is performed, and the plaques observed on subsequent days of the assay are calculated as a percentage of the number of plaques observed at the end of the plaque assay. As shown in Fig. 14, after 4 days of plaque assay on A549 cells, GZ1 and GZ3 had 48% and 34%, respectively, of the final number of plaques, whereas *dl309* had only 1%. It is very unusual in Ad plaque assays in A549 cells for plaques to appear after only 4 days. These large plaques reflect the overexpression of ADP. These GZ1 and GZ3 plaques appear sooner than those of KD1 and KD3 (data not shown), no doubt because GZ1 and GZ3 replicate faster because they have a wild-type E1A region.

GZ1 and GZ3 lyse cells and spread from cell to cell much more effectively than *dl309*. At 6 days p.i. of A549 cells, approximately as much monolayer destruction was observed with GZ1 and GZ3 at  $10^{-3}$  PFU per cell as was observed with *dl309* at  $10^{-1}$  PFU per cell (Fig. 15, top panel). This result further underscores the conclusion that overexpression of ADP promotes cell lysis and virus spread.

In theory, GZ1 and GZ3 should be able to replicate not only in tumor cells but also in normal cells. Although they can replicate in normal cells, it is quite possible that GZ1 and

GZ3 may be useful as anti-cancer vectors. First, GZ1 and GZ3 could be injected directly into the tumor. Many tumors are self-contained (encapsulated) except for the blood supply. The physical barriers of the tumor could minimize dissemination of the virus to other tissues. Second, Ads are in general quite benign. Most infections of Ad5 are in infants and result in mild or asymptomatic disease, and are held in check by strong humoral and cellular immunity. Anti-Ad immunity appears to be life-long. GZ1 and GZ3 could be used only in patients who have an intact immune system, and perhaps also with pre-existing anti-Ad immunity. Further, patients could be passively immunized against Ad, using gamma-globulin or even specific purified anti-Ad neutralizing antibodies. Third, considering that Ad5 is a respiratory virus which most efficiently infects lung epithelial cells displaying the specific Ad5 receptor (named CAR) as well as specific integrins (e.g.  $\alpha_v\beta_5$ ), replication-competent vectors derived from Ad5 may not spread efficiently in many non-cancer tissues of the body. In addition, it is believed that versions of GZ1 and GZ3 can be constructed that have the E4 promoter substituted with a tumor-specific, tissue-specific, cell-specific, or synthetic promoter. Such vectors would have the positive features associated with wild-type E1A and ADP, and yet be replication-restricted to tumor tissue and/or to particular cell types.

#### Example 8

This example illustrates that the combination of KD1, KD3, GZ1, or GZ3 with radiation is more effective in destroying A549 cells, growing in culture or growing as tumors in nude mice, than the vectors alone or radiation alone.

This was shown in a cell spread assay. A549 cells growing in three 48 well culture dishes were mock-infected or infected with different viruses at multiplicities of infection ranging from 10 to  $10^{-4}$  PFU per cell as indicated in Fig. 15. One dish was not radiated. A second dish received 600 centigrays (cGy) of radiation at 24 h p.i., and a third dish received 2000 cGy of radiation at the same time. All dishes were stained with crystal violet at 6 days p.i. With the cells that were not radiated (top panel in Fig. 15), KD1 and KD3 caused monolayer destruction at lower multiplicities of infection than their parental control, *dl101/07*. This was also true for GZ1 and GZ3 as compared to their parental control *dl309*. (The paucity of cells in the cells infected with GZ1 or GZ3 at  $10^{-4}$  PFU per cell is an experimental artifact, and is not caused by infection by GZ1 or GZ3). These KD1, KD3, GZ1 and GZ3 results are consistent with earlier results showing that overexpression of ADP leads to increased cell lysis and virus spread.

With the dish that was infected then radiated with 600 cGy there was markedly increased cell killing and virus spread as compared to the non-radiated cells (compare the

bottom panel of Fig. 15 with the top panel). For example, with KD1, KD3, GZ1, and GZ3 there was about the same amount of cell destruction in the radiated wells at  $10^{-4}$  PFU per cell as in the non-radiated wells at  $10^{-2}$  PFU per cell. Similar results were seen with the dish that received 2000 cGy of radiation (data not shown), and also with dishes that received 600 or

The amount of cell destruction was quantitated by extracting the crystal violet from the cells with 33% acetic acid, then measuring the absorbance at 490 nm (data not shown). The absorbance with non-radiated mock-infected cells was set at 100% cell viability. With mock-infected cells that received 600 cGy there was a 15% loss in viability (i.e. 15% less crystal violet was extracted). With KD1 at  $10^{-3}$  PFU per cell, the non-radiated cells were 80% viable whereas the cells receiving 600 cGy of radiation were only about 30% viable. Similar differences in viability between radiated and non-radiated cells were seen with KD3, GZ1, and GZ3. These results argue that the combination of radiation plus vector has a synergistic effect on cell lysis and vector spread, rather than an additive effect. If the effect were only additive, then with the KD1 samples at  $10^{-3}$  PFU per cell, the cell viability should have been 65% (15% reduction in viability due to radiation alone, 20% reduction due to KD1 alone). In fact, the cell viability was 30% rather than 65%.

As mentioned, approximately as much cell lysis and virus spread were observed with 600 cGy as with 2000 cGy. To determine the optimal dose of radiation to synergize with the vectors, an experiment similar to the one described above was conducted with mock-, *dl01/07*-, KD1-, KD3-, *dl309*, GZ1-, or GZ3-infected A549 cells. The 48 well plates received 0, 150, 300, or 600 cGy of radiation at 24 h p.i. Cells were stained with crystal violet. The results with cells receiving 0 versus 600 cGy of radiation were similar to those in Fig. 15. The crystal violet was extracted from the cells infected with  $10^{-3}$  PFU per cell of the difference viruses. The absorbance of crystal violet was determined, and the percent cell viability was graphed, using the absorbance of the non-radiated mock-infected cells as 100% cell viability. As illustrated in Fig. 16, an approximately linear decrease in cell viability in all wells was obtained with increasing radiation dose, although the slope of the line was more negative with KD1, KD3, GZ1, or GZ3 than with mock, *dl01/07*, or *dl309*. With KD1, KD3, GZ1, and GZ3, there was much more cell lysis and vector spread with their parental control viruses, and there was synergy between the vectors and radiation. For example, with mock-infected cells, 600 cGy reduced cell viability by about 30% (70% of cells were viable). KD1 without radiation reduced cell viability by about 23%. The combination of 600 cGy radiation plus KD1 reduced cell viability to about 85%, more than 53% of which is the sum of radiation

alone and KD1 alone. When considering the data in Figs. 15 and 16 together, a dose of about 600 cGy is optimal in this type of cell culture experiment.

The combination of KD3 or GZ3 with radiation was also examined in the A549 tumor-nude mouse model (see Example 4). A549 cells were injected into the hind flanks of nude mice, and tumors were allowed to form. When tumors reached approximately 50- $\mu$ l, they were injected with buffer or with  $5 \times 10^8$  PFU of KD3 or GZ3. Eight to ten tumors were injected per test condition. At 1 day p.i., half the mice received 600 cGy of whole body radiation. Tumor size was measured over time, and was plotted as a fold-increase in tumor size versus days p.i. (as described in Example 4). As shown in Fig. 17, the non-radiated buffer-injected tumors grew faster than those injected with KD3 or GZ3. Tumors that received the combination of KD3 and radiation did not grow, and those that received the combination of GZ3 and radiation shrank in size after 14 days. These results indicate that the combination of KD3 plus radiation or GZ3 plus radiation is more effective than either vector alone or radiation alone in reducing the rate of A549 tumor growth in nude mice. It is likely that radiation would increase the effectiveness in treating tumors of KD1 and GZ1, or indeed any other replication-competent or replication-defective Ad vector.

The mechanism by which radiation causes the ADP overexpressing vectors to lyse cells and spread from cell-to-cell more effectively is not understood. Radiation is expected to induce cellular DNA repair mechanisms, and that may allow for more efficient synthesis of Ad DNA. Radiation may enhance the function of ADP. ADP probably functions by interacting with one or more cellular proteins, and radiation may affect this protein(s) such that ADP functions more efficiently.

It is believed that KD1, KD3, GZ1, or GZ3, or any other replication-competent Ad vector, when used in combination with radiation, will be more effective than vector alone or radiation alone in providing clinical benefit to patients with cancer. The vectors should allow more tumor destruction with a given amount of radiation. Stated another way, radiation should cause more tumor destruction with a given amount of vector. These vectors should also allow the radiation oncologist to use less radiation to achieve the same amount of tumor destruction. Less radiation would reduce the side effects of the radiation.

It is also believed that a cocktail of vectors when used in combination with radiation will be more effective than the cocktail alone or radiation alone. The cocktail could consist of ADP producing vectors plus one or more replication defective vectors expressing an anticancer therapeutic protein (see Example 5).

## Example 9

This example illustrates a structure-function analysis of adenovirus death protein.

ADP is an 11.6 kDa N-linked O-linked integral membrane glycoprotein that localizes to the inner nuclear membrane (NM) (Scaria et al., *Virology* 191:743-753). As illustrated in Fig. 18, the Ad2-encoded ADP (SEQ ID NO:6) consists of 101 amino acids; aa 1-40 (SEQ ID NO:17) are luminal, aa 41-59 (SEQ ID NO:18) constitute the transmembrane signal-anchor (SA) domain, aa 63-70 (SEQ ID NO:19) constitute a basic proline (BP) domain within the nucleoplasmic (NP) domain, which constitutes aa 61-101 (SEQ ID NO:20). To determine which domains in ADP are required to promote cell death, a number of deletion mutants of *rec700* were prepared which lacked various portions of the ADP gene and examined for the ability of ADP to localize to the NM and promote death. The *rec700* virus is an Ad5-Ad-Ad5 recombinant which has been described elsewhere (Wold et al., *Virology* 148:168-180, 1986).

The structure of ADP in *rec700* and in each deletion mutant is schematically illustrated in Fig. 18. The ADP gene in each deletion mutant has been sequenced using PCR methods to insure that the mutations are correct. The structure and activity of ADP in the deletion mutants was tested by infecting A549 cells followed by immunoblot analysis of the ADP mutant proteins as well as the ability to lyse cells. All deletion mutants expressed a stable ADP protein except *pm734.1* ( $\Delta 1-48$ , i.e. aa 1-48 are deleted). The *pm734.7* ( $N_{14}$ ) ADP, which has Asn<sub>14</sub> mutated to Ser, is O-glycosylated but not N-glycosylated because Asn<sub>14</sub> is the only N-glycosylation site (data not shown). The *dl735* ( $\Delta 4-11$ ) ADP is N-glycosylated but not O-glycosylated because the sites for O-glycosylation are deleted (data not shown). The *pm734.4* (M56) ADP, which has Met<sub>56</sub> in the SA domain mutated to Ser, contains exclusively N-linked high-mannose oligosaccharides (data not shown); this occurs because the Met<sub>56</sub> mutation precludes exit of ADP from the endoplasmic reticulum (ER). The *dl738* ADP, which lacks aa 46-60 in the signal-anchor domain, forms insoluble aggregates in the cytoplasm; therefore, aa 41-59 do in fact include the signal-anchor domain. The *pm734* ( $\Delta 1-40$ ) ADP, which initiates at Met<sub>41</sub> at the N-terminus of the SA domain, comigrated with the lower group of bands generated by proteolytic processing (data not shown). This indicates that the proteolytic cleavage sites occur near Met<sub>41</sub>. Consistent with this, the proteolytic products were not seen with *dl737* ( $\Delta 29-45$ ) (data not shown). Also, the size of the products decreased in all mutants with deletions within aa 41-101 (*dl715.1*, *dl715*, *dl714*, *dl716*) (data not shown).

The ability of these mutants to promote cell death was monitored by trypan blue exclusion, plaque development, and lactate dehydrogenase release assays (Tollefson et al., *J. Virol.* 70:2296-2306, 1996). The trypan blue results in Fig. 15A indicate that the death-

promoting function of ADP was abolished by deletion of aa 1-40 (*pm734*), aa 11-26 (*dl736.1*), aa 18-22 (*dl735.1*), or aa 4-11 (*dl735*). Mutation of the N-glycosylation site at Asn<sub>14</sub> (*pm734.7*) reduced the death-promoting activity to about 50% of *rec700* (WT). *dl737* ( $\Delta$ 29-45) was efficient as *rec700* in promoting cell death; this indicates that the proteolytic processing products must not be required to promote cell death because they are not formed with *dl737*. The SA domain is essential for death because *dl738* ( $\Delta$ 46-60) and *pm734.4* (M56) were completely defective (Fig. 19). *dl715.1* was nearly completely defective, indicating that the BP domain is extremely important. Surprisingly, aa 71-94 (*dl714*), 76-89 (*dl715*), and 79-101 (*dl716*) could be deleted without affecting the death-promoting activity of ADP (Fig. 19). On the other hand, deletion of aa 81-88 (*dl717*) nearly completely abolished the activity of ADP (Fig. 19); this is probably the result of aberrant sorting of ADP (see below). Similar results were obtained when the ability of these ADP mutants to promote cell death was examined with standard plaque development, LDH-release and MTT assays.

The effects of these mutations on the intracellular localization of ADP are extremely interesting. When examined by immunofluorescence (IF) at 33 h p.i. (data not shown), ADP from *rec700* (WT) localized crisply to the NM; localization to the Golgi was also apparent. With *dl714* ( $\Delta$ 71-94) and *dl715* ( $\Delta$ 76-89), ADP localized to all membranes, i.e. the ER, Golgi, plasma membrane, and NM. This was even more apparent at 45 h p.i. (data not shown). Thus, aa 71-94 appear to include a signal that directs ADP specifically to the NM. ADP is very likely sorted from the *trans*-Golgi network (TGN) to the NM, so this putative signal in ADP probably functions in this sorting pathway. ADP from *dl717* ( $\Delta$ 81-88) is intriguing: it localized to the NM and Golgi, but in many cells "dots" and circular structures were observed. Again, this was more apparent at 45 h p.i. when these structures were the prominent feature. *dl717*-infected cells have not begun to die at 45 h p.i., so these structures are not cellular remnants. The intriguing possibility is that these structures are membrane vesicles that have pinched off from the TGN but are defective in targeting to and/or fusing with the NM.

With *dl738* ( $\Delta$ 46-60 in the SA domain), ADP aggregated in the cytoplasm. This again indicates that aa 46-60 include the SA sequence. With *pm734.4* (M56), ADP localized primarily to the NM. As discussed above, the *pm734.4* ADP has exclusively high-mannose N-linked oligosaccharides, indicating that it never leaves the ER. Perhaps the putative NM-localization signal in the C-terminal region of the *pm734.4* ADP targets ADP to the NM by lateral diffusion from the ER (which is continuous with the outer and inner NM).

With *dl737* ( $\Delta$ 29-45), ADP localized to the NM. ADP from *pm734* ( $\Delta$ 1-40), *pm734.7* (N14) (N-linked glycosylation cannot occur), and *dl735* ( $\Delta$ 4-11; the O-glycosylation sites are deleted) localized much more prominently to the Golgi than the NM. ADP from *dl735.1*

( $\Delta$ 18-22) and *dl736.1* ( $\Delta$ 11-26) also localized much more strongly to the Golgi than the NM. Thus, residues 1-26 and/or glycosylation appear to be required for efficient transport of ADP from the Golgi/TGN to the NM.

In summary, aa 41-59 include the SA domain, Met<sub>56</sub> in the SA domain is required for exit from the ER, aa 1-26 are required for efficient exit from the Golgi, and aa 76-94 are required to target ADP specifically to the NM. With respect to promoting cell death, the essential regions are aa 1-26, the SA domain (ADP does not enter membranes), Met<sub>56</sub> in the SA domain, and the BP domain (aa 63-70). It is not clear whether the defective death-promoting phenotype of *pm734* ( $\Delta$ 1-40), *dl735* ( $\Delta$ 4-11), *dl735.1* ( $\Delta$ 18-22), *dl736.1* ( $\Delta$ 11-26), and *pm734.7* (N14) is due to lack of sequences (or oligosaccharides) that promote death or to much slower exit of ADP from the Golgi to the NM. *dl714* ( $\Delta$ 71-94) and *dl715* ( $\Delta$ 76-89) express a wild-type phenotype for promoting death even though they are defective in localizing specifically to the NM; this is probably because sufficient ADP still enters the NM to promote death. Even though the deletion in *dl717* ( $\Delta$ 81-88) lies within the deletions in *dl715* ( $\Delta$ 76-89) and *dl714* ( $\Delta$ 71-94), the *dl717* ADP is only about 15% as efficient as *rec700* (WT), *dl715* and *dl714* in promoting death. This may be because the *dl717* ADP tends to remain in vesicles rather than localizing to the NM. Altogether, these data indicate that ADP must localize to the NM in order to promote cell death.

In view of the above, it will be seen that the several advantages of the invention are achieved and other advantageous results attained.

As various changes could be made in the above methods and compositions without departing from the scope of the invention, it is intended that all matter contained in the above description and shown in the accompanying drawings shall be interpreted as illustrative and not in a limiting sense.

All references cited in this specification, including patents and patent applications, are hereby incorporated by reference. The discussion of references herein is intended merely to summarize the assertions made by their authors and no admission is made that any reference constitutes prior art. Applicants reserve the right to challenge the accuracy and pertinency of the cited references.